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ABSTRACT

This curriculum guide includes letters and postal history from three U.S. wars: the Civil War, World War II, and the Vietnam War. The postal pack was developed with the idea that letters and stamps present personal perspectives that enable students to comprehend the past better. Letters in the postal pack are printed in both the original handwritten form and a typewritten transcript. The pack also provides discussion questions for each letter. It is divided into four sections: (1) "The Civil War: Mail Call"; "The Civil War: Ex Post Facto"; "Letters from the War"; "Envelope Journey: Letters That Dared to Cross a Divided Nation"; (2) "World War II: Mail Call"; "World War II: Ex Post Facto"; "Letters from the War"; "Envelope Journey: Occupied!"; (3) "The Vietnam War: Mail Call"; "The Vietnam War: Ex Post Facto"; "Letters from the War"; "Envelope Journey: Envelopes with a Message"; and (4) "Dear Teacher: From One Classroom Teacher to Another"; "Answers to Questions"; "Resources/Credits"; and "Collecting Our History". (BT)

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We Were There: Letters from the Battle Front.
Postal Pack for Secondary Students.

National Postal Museum, Washington, DC.

SO 031 908

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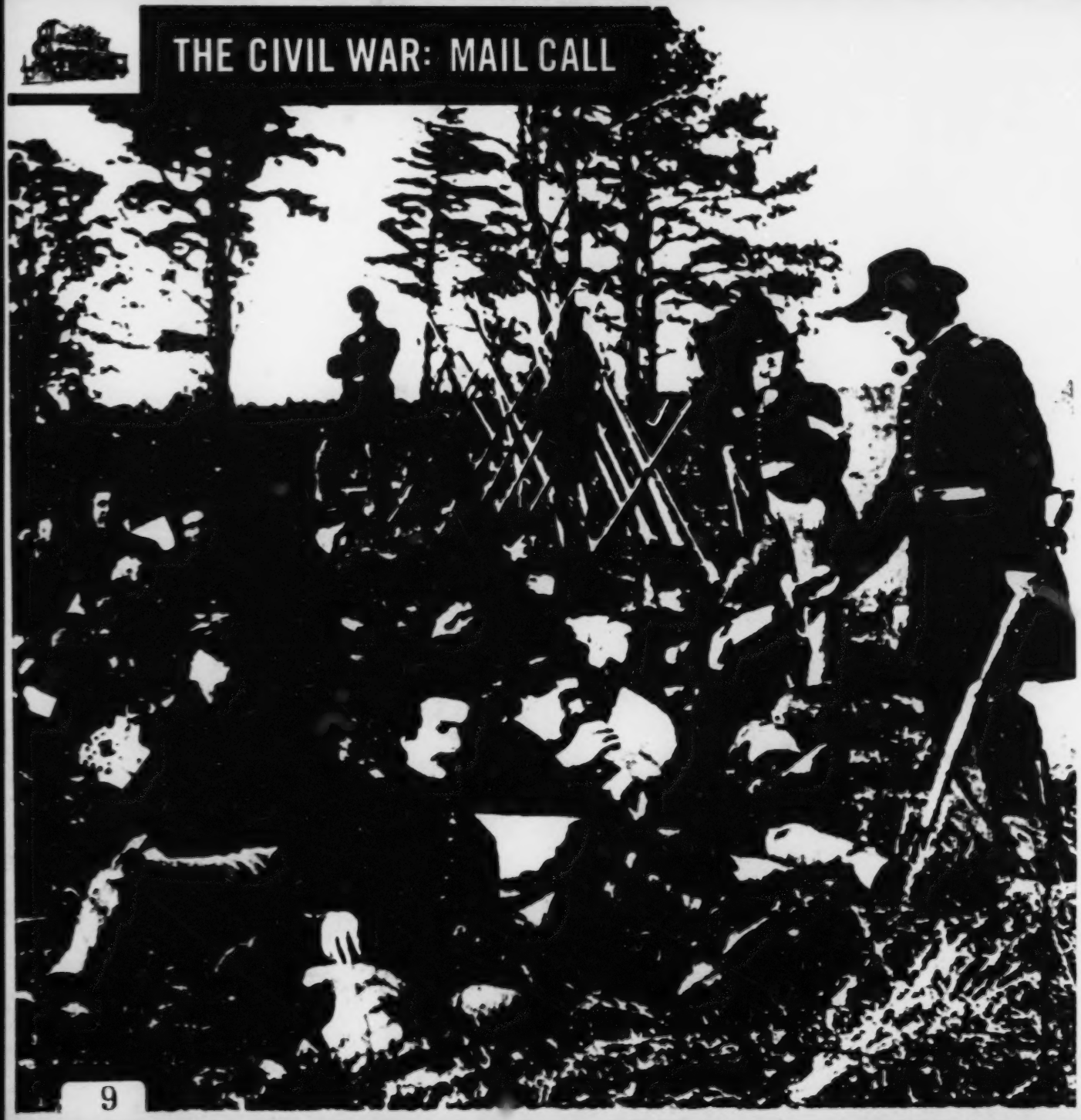
Dear Teacher,

Welcome to the National Postal Museum! Because you may not be able to visit our galleries, we have brought some of our galleries to you. This postal pack includes letters and postal history from three American wars. Letters and stamps provide personal perspectives that enable students to better comprehend the past. Please select the sections that best coincide with your current American history or language arts studies.

These materials are ready for photocopying. We suggest that students read the original letters. They should resort to the transcript only if necessary, because the original offers students a more personal sense of the writer's style. You might prefer to read these letters to your students or have them work in small groups. Answers to the questions can be found on the resource page.

The National Postal Museum is a part of the Smithsonian Institution. It is located in the former Washington City Post Office, a historic landmark, built in 1914. Now, six galleries, videos, films, and computer interactives tell the story of America's postal history.

THE CIVIL WAR: MAIL CALL



From 1861 to 1865, the American Civil War tore apart the nation. Northern and Southern soldiers and seamen left home, many for the first time, to fight and die. Letters were the primary link between members of families severed by war. The rich history of the American Civil War is preserved in these letters. Nearly 500,000 American military men died in the Civil War, more than in World War II and the Vietnam War combined.

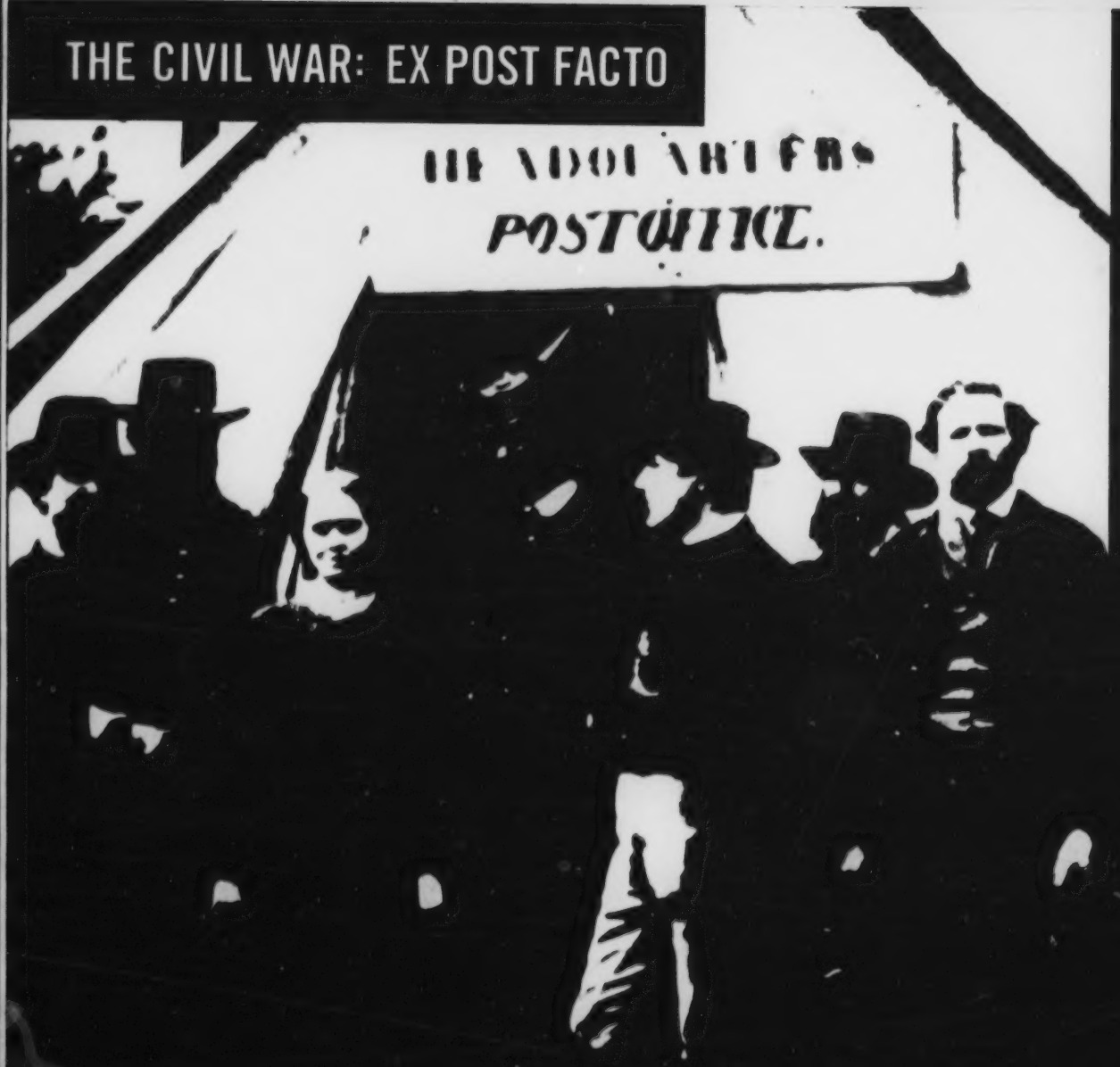
THE CIVIL WAR: EX POST FACTO

...AN EARLY FORM OF RECYCLING?

Near the end of the war, conditions became so bad in the South people were forced to use almost anything they could for paper and envelopes. People fashioned envelopes from wallpaper and the pages of accounting books. These unusual envelopes made from discarded materials are called "adversity covers."

WAITING IN LONG, LONG LINES...?

Before the Civil War, Americans had no free home mail delivery. They picked up their mail at the local post office. Free home delivery of mail began in 49 Northern cities in 1863, when postal officials decided that it was cruel to require the families of soldiers to receive death notices at post office windows. After the war, veterans were hired by the federal government to provide door-to-door delivery service. They were the first generation of city letter carriers.



WHAT IS THE ANGEL OF THE BATTLEFIELD DOING AT THE POSTOFFICE?

WAS THERE AN OFFICE SUPPLY STORE ON THE BATTLEFIELD?

A 1,000-man Northern regiment might send and receive an average of 600 letters per day. At one point, 45,000 pieces of mail a day passed to and from the regiments through Washington, D.C. This volume of mail generated by soldiers was unprecedented in American history. In the North, supplies of ink, pens, and paper were available from *sutlers*, merchants who followed troops and sold supplies out of wagons. Writing kits were also widely advertised in newspapers as good gifts for families to purchase for soldiers.

THE CIVIL WAR: LETTER 1

This letter was written by Captain James A. Graham (1841-1908) of Hillsboro, North Carolina. His father, William Graham, served as a governor of North Carolina, secretary of the Navy under President Millard Fillmore, a U.S. senator, and a senator of the Confederate States of America. He enlisted in April 1861 in Company G, 27th Regiment of the North Carolina Infantry and remained with his unit until the end of the war. Afterwards he practiced law and served in the State Senate and the Federal Pensions Administration.

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Camp 27th N.C.R. Infty -
March 8th 1865 -

My dear Mother

Contrary to my expectations we have had no fight on our lines yet, and I am beginning to think that we will not have one soon; for I believe that Grant will wait for Sherman & Co to develope their plans fully before he tries us.

The spirits of our troops are improving every day and I hope they will soon be all right again. There have been a great many desertions lately, but my company had never had one since the war commenced until one night last

week when four of my men
deserted to the Yankees. Their
names were W. T. Cope, W. A. Corat-
tree, W. H. Crabtree and D. C. Paul.
I had prided myself a good
deal on never having had a de-
serter and hoped that I would
would never have one. I can't
see how any man in his senses
can desert if he will only
think of it for a moment. Most
of the desertions lately have been
caused by letters from home.
If the people at home would
only write cheering letters to
their friends in the army in-
stead of counselling them to
commit this last crime every-
thing would go on so much
better with us.
I got to Richmond last
Friday and returned to camp

Sunday. Father was very
well. I saw Johnny & Robert
on Sunday. They were also
well. I wish you would
send me by the first opportunity
two pr socks as those
I have are nearly worn out.
Also please send the pants
I sent to you about some time
ago. I received Sudie's let-
ter a day or two ago in
which she states that you
would send me something
by Walter Thompson. He has
not yet arrived but we are
looking for him every day.
I saw yesterday a Yan-
kee paper of the 5th inst containe-
ing Lincoln's inaugural address.
It was very short - little over
half a column. He called slavery
an offence in the sight of God.

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THE CIVIL WAR: LETTER 1 [continued]

and said that this war was not
upon us as a free choice for that
country and that herefore "it would
behoove him to do all the duties
in the cause" &c quoted a great
deal from the Bible and I think
was really sacreligious in some
parts of it. Day after to-morrow
is the day set apart by President
Davis as a "day of fasting, humilia-
tion & prayer" and I hope it may
be strictly observed both by the ar-
my and the people at home, for
we need God's help in this our time
of trouble, and I believe that he will
yet bring us out of our trials
and enable us to triumph over
the Yankees.

There is no news in our
parts. Love to all. Write Sam.

Your affectionate Son
Jas. A. Graham.

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LETTER 1: TRANSCRIPT

Camp 27th NO. CA. INFY
March 8th 1865

My Dear Mother

Contrary to my expectations we have had no fight on our lines yet, and I am beginning to think that we will not have one soon; for I believe that Grant will wait for Sherman & Co. to develop their plans fully before he tries us.

The spirits of our troops are improving every day and I hope they will soon be all right again. There have been a great many desertions lately, but my company had never had one since the war commenced until one night last week when four of my men deserted to the Yankees. Their names were W. T. Cape, W. A. Crabtree, W. H. Crabtree and D. C. Paul.

I prided myself a good deal on never having had a deserter and hoped that I would never have one. I can't see how any man in his senses can desert if he will only think of it for a moment. Most of the desertions lately have been caused by letters from home. If the people at home would only write cheering letters to their friends in the army instead of counseling them to commit this base crime everything would go on so much better with us.

I went to Richmond last Friday and continue to camp Sunday. Father was well. I saw Johnny and Robert on Sunday. They were also well. I wish you would send me by the first opportunity two pairs socks as those I have are nearly worn out. Also please send the pants I wrote to you about some time ago. I received Sudie's letter a day or two ago in which she stated that you would send me something by Walter Thompson. He has not yet arrived but we are looking for him every day.

I saw yesterday a Yankee newspaper of the 5th inst. containing Lincoln's inaugural address. It was very short little over half a column. He called slavery an offense in the sight of God and said that this war was sent upon us as a punishment for that offense and that perhaps "it would continue till every drop of blood drawn by the lash was repaid by that drawn by the sword." He quoted a good deal from the Bible and I think was really sacreligious in some parts of it. Day after tomorrow is the day set apart by President Davis as a "day of fasting, humiliation & prayer" and I hope may be strictly observed both by the army and the people at home, for we need God's help in this our time of trouble, and I believe that he will yet bring us out of all our trials and enable us to triumph over the Yankees.

There is no news in our camp. Love to all. Write soon.

Your affectionate Son
Jas. A. Graham

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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THE CHRISTIA

Published by the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United S

Rev. Elisha Weaver, Editor. PHILADELPHI

This letter was written by an African American soldier from Company B, 54th Massachusetts Infantry on March 13, 1864. It was printed in an African American newspaper, *The Christian Recorder*, in Philadelphia on April 2, 1864.

The Christian Recorder was a major African American publication from 1852 to 1902. It was the newspaper of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.). The paper offered its readers articles on religion, science, literature, and important issues affecting black Americans. The *Recorder* encouraged readers to send articles and letters to the editor for publication. In its pages, writers protested, time and again, challenged attempts to deprive African Americans of their civil rights and protested acts of discrimination. The letter is signed E. D. W., probably Edward D. Washington of Philadelphia. He writes about the Battle of Olustee in Florida.

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For the Christian Recorder.

Mr. Editor—Sir:—It is with pleasure that I now seat myself to inform you concerning our last battle; thus we were in Co. B, on the 20th of Feb. Mr. Editor, I am not sitting down to inform about this battle without knowing something about it.

The battle took place in a grove called Olustee, with the different regiments as follows: First was the 8th U. S.; they were cut up badly, and they were the first colored regiment in the battle. The next were the 54th Mass., which I belong to; the next were the 1st N. C. In they went and fired a few rounds, but they soon danced out, things were too warm for them. The firing was very warm, and it continued for about three hours and a half. The 54th was the last off the field When the 1st N. C., found out it was so warm they soon left, and then there was none left to cover the retreat. But captain J. Walton, of the

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N RECORDER.

tes, for the Dissemination of Religion, Morality, Literature and Science.

APRIL 2, 1864. Vol. IV.—No. 14.—New Series. Whole No. 169.

54th, of our company, with shouts and cheers, cried, "Give it to them my brave boys! give it to them!" As I turned around, I observed Col. E. N. Holowell standing with a smile upon his countenance, as though the boys were playing a small game of ball.

There was none left but the above named, and Lieut. Col. Hooper, and also Col. Montgomery: those were the only field officers that were left with us. If we had been like those regiments that were ahead, I think not only in my own mind, but in the minds of the field officers, such as Col. Hooper and Col. Montgomery, that we would have suffered much loss, is plain to be seen, for the enemy had taken some three or four of their pieces.

When we got there we rushed in double-quick, with a command from the General, "Right into line." We commenced with a severe firing, and the enemy soon gave way for some two hundred yards. Our forces were light, and we were compelled to fall back with much dissatisfaction.

Now it seems strange to me that we do not receive the same pay and rations as the white soldiers. Do we not fill the same ranks? Do we not cover the same space of ground? Do we not take up the same length of ground in the grave-yard that others do? The ball does not miss the black man and strike the white, nor the white and strike the black. But, sir, at that time there is no distinction made, they strike one as much as another. The black men has to go through the same hurling of musketry, and the same belching of cannonading as white soldiers do.

It has been nearly a year since we have received any pay; but the white soldiers get their pay every two months; ($13.00 per month,) but when it comes to the poor negro he gets none.

The 54th left Boston on the 28th of May, 1863. In time of enlisting members for the regiment, they were promised the same pay, and the same rations as other soldiers. Since that time the government must have charged them more for clothing than any other regiment; for those who died in a month or two after their enlistment, it was actually said that they were in debt to the government. Those who bled and died on James' Island and Wagner, are the same. Why is it not so with other soldiers? Because our faces are black. We are put beneath the very lowest rioters of New York. We have never brought any disgrace by cowardice, on the State we left.

F. D. W.

Co. B, 54th Mass., Vol.

Jacksonville Fla March 18th 1864

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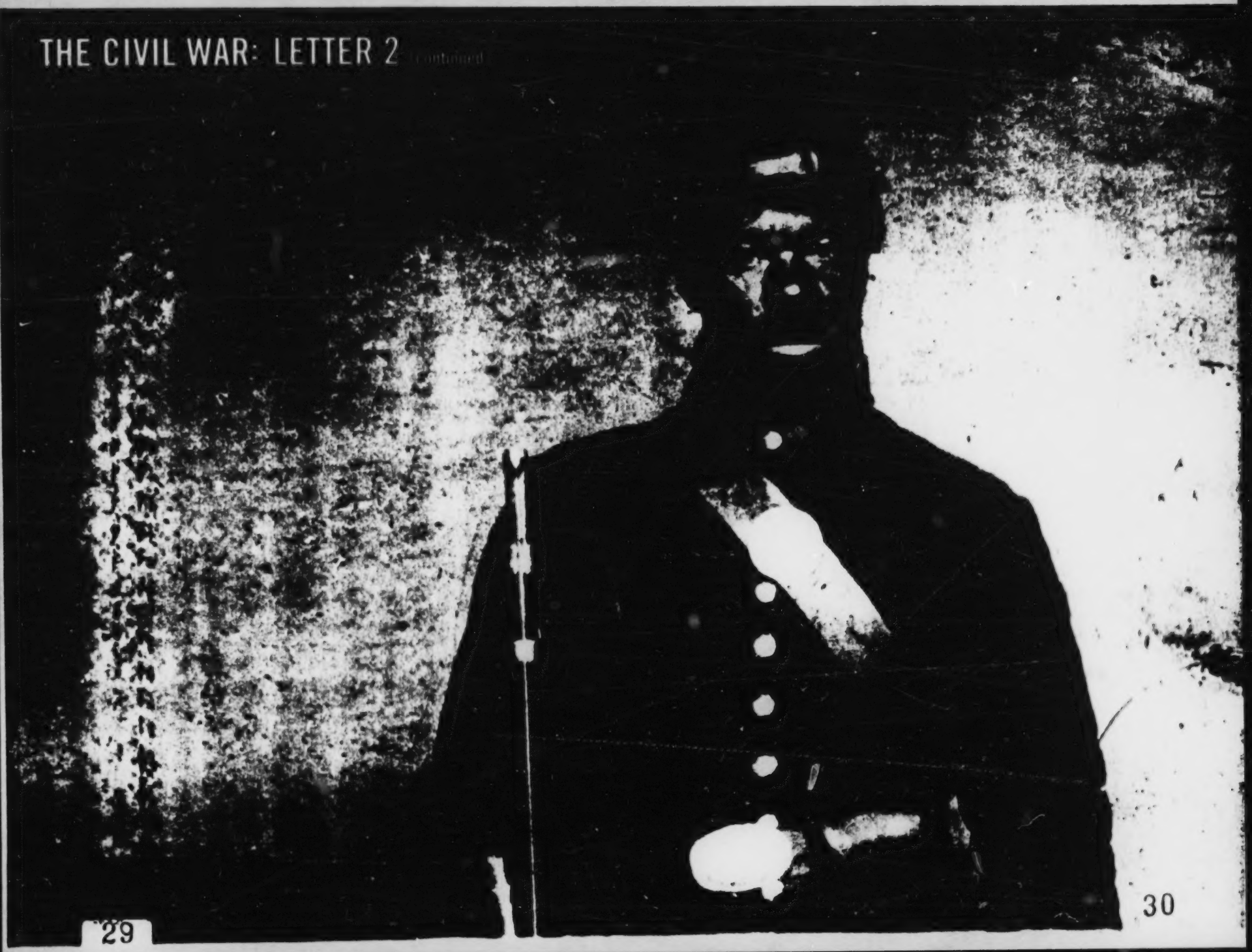
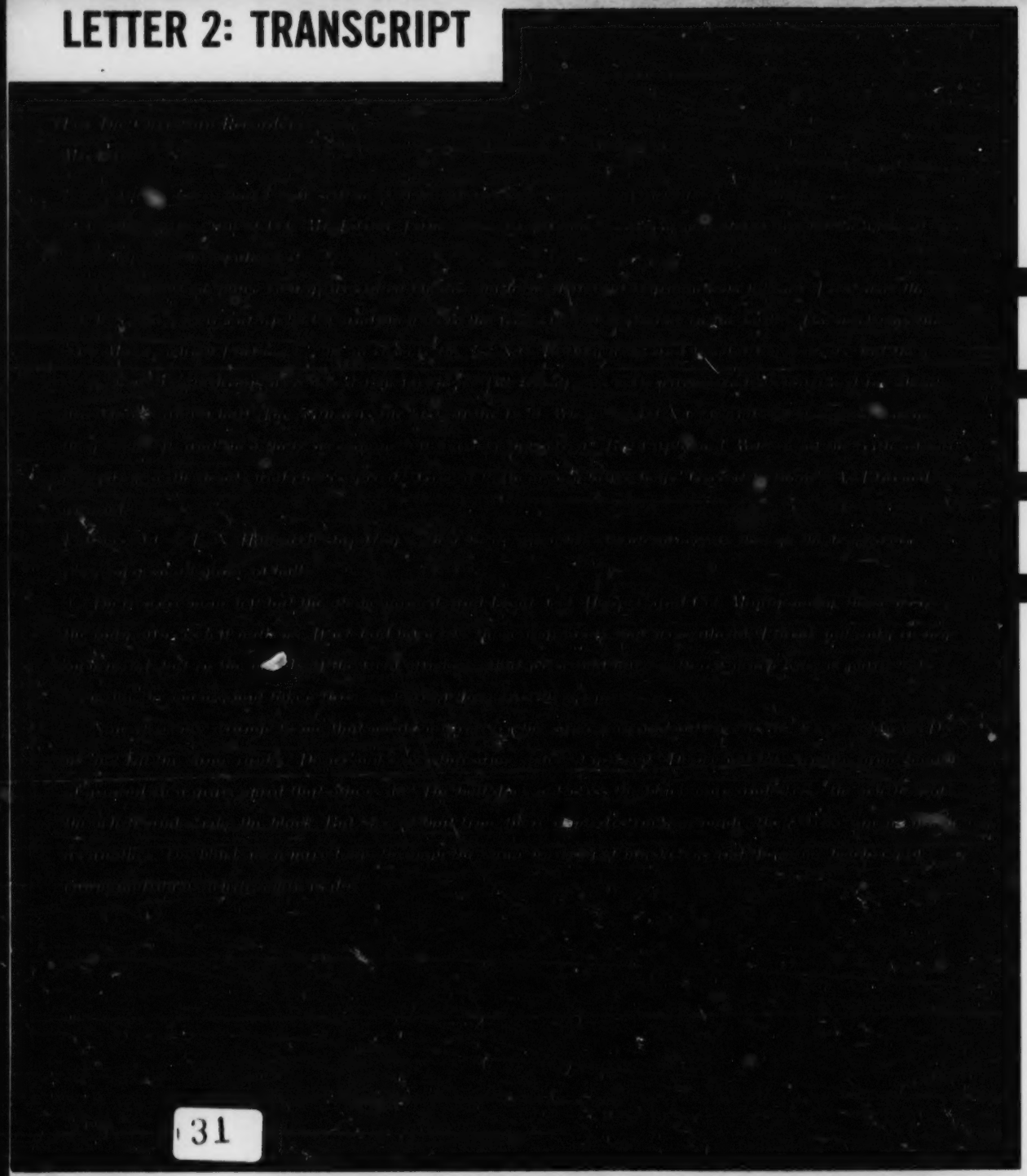
THE CIVIL WAR: LETTER 2 (continued)



LETTER 2: TRANSCRIPT



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. To whom did Edward Washington write the letter? (This answer can be found in the first sentence.) Why would he write a letter to a newspaper?

2. The primary topic of the letter is a description of a battle in Florida. What does the writer mean by "the firing was warm?"

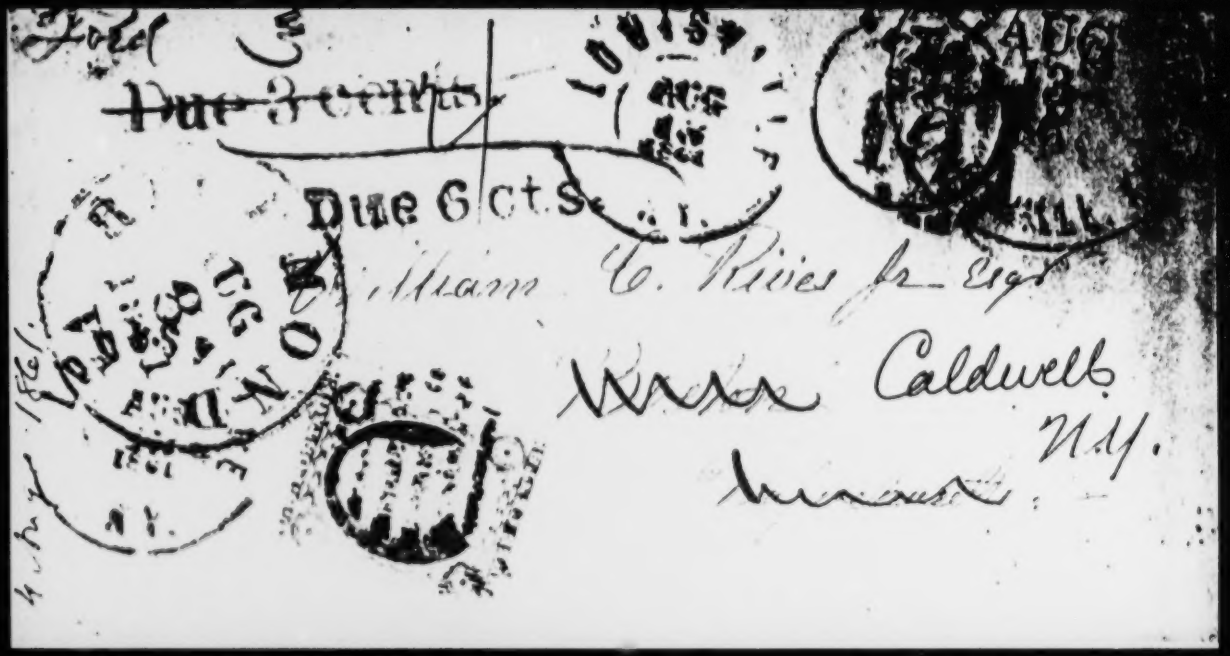
3. What other issue does the letter writer discuss? In the opinion of the writer, what are the arguments for equal pay?

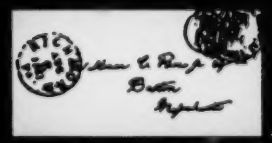
4. *Class Project:* Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper expressing your opinion of a cause you feel strongly about.

ENVELOPE JOURNEY: LETTERS THAT DARED TO CROSS A DIVIDED NATION

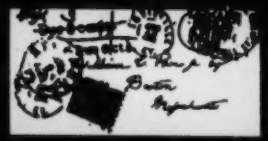
From the spring of 1861 until the end of the Civil War, the border between the Union and the Confederacy was closed to mail. Letters had to take unusual routes to reach their destinations. Sometimes letters traveled to Nassau in the Bahamas or Havana, Cuba, and then were carried into Southern ports by a blockade runner (a sea-going vessel that illegally ran through the Union blockade of the South). Private express companies carried some letters across the closed border.

The postmarks and stamps on envelopes (called "covers" by stamp collectors) can tell us the location of a letter's origin, the date it was mailed, and sometimes the method of transportation that brought it to its destination.





4. The U.S. Post Office in Louisville adds U.S. stamps, postmarks the letters and adds "Due 4 cents" to the letter. Mr. Rives will have to pay 4 cents postage when he receives it.



5. The letters were sent to Mr. Rives's home in Boston, but Mr. Rives moved to Caldwell, New York, but left word at the post office to have his mail forwarded to his new location. The postmaster in Boston charges another three cents for forwarding and the letter is sent to Caldwell.

6. The letter is received, and is marked to indicate it was received in Caldwell, New York. Mr. Rives pays 3 cents and the letter is delivered.

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MICHIGAN
Detroit
Caldwell
NEW YORK
Buffalo
Boston
MASS
RI
CONN
New York City
PENNSYLVANIA
Philadelphia
NJ
Gettysburg
Chicago
Cleveland
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
Indianapolis
Cincinnati
Harper's Ferry
Md
Del
Washington, D.C.
Chancellorsville
Fredericksburg
VIRGINIA
Richmond
Appomattox
Petersburg
Lynchburg
Louisville
KENTUCKY
Greensboro
Raleigh
Durham Station
N. CAROLINA
Nashville
Knoxville
Charlotte
Fayetteville
TENN
Chattanooga
Memphis
S. CAROLINA
Columbia
Bermuda
Oxford
Atlanta
Charleston
MISS
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
Jackson
Selma
Columbus
Vicksburg
Montgomery
Savannah
Natchez
Mobile
Tallahassee
Jacksonville
FLORIDA
New Orleans
ATLANTIC OCEAN
GULF OF MEXICO

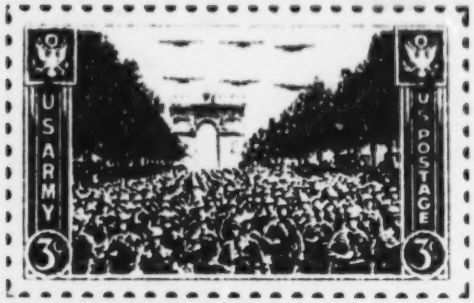
Directions: Draw a line that follows the path of the letter and number each of

WORLD WAR II: MAIL CALL

The Second World War was fought across six of the planet's seven continents and in all of the oceans. The war effort included the involvement of over 16 million American men and women. The United States supplied its own armed forces and manufactured huge quantities of war material for its British and Russian allies. American factories produced 100,000 tanks, 274,000 military aircraft, 41 million rounds of ammunition, and 55 million tons of merchant shipping.

Communicating with families and friends was a great morale booster for the men and women stationed around the world. But transporting mail across a world at war was fraught with obstacles. The Post Office Department used a new technology, V-Mail, to deliver enormous amounts of mail vast distances.

WORLD WAR II: EX POST FACTO



WHAT'S DIFFERENT BETWEEN THIS STAMP AND THE PHOTO BELOW?

This stamp was released on September 28, 1945, to honor the U.S. Army. The photograph depicts the 28th Infantry Division marching through Paris on August 29, 1944. General George C. Marshall is credited with selecting this photograph to be made into a stamp. How is the stamp the same yet different from the photograph? Marshall came up with the idea of adding six bombers to the picture even though there were no bombers present at that particular moment. Because this stamp was meant to honor the entire U.S. Army and the Army Air Corps which had made a crucial contribution to the war effort, special alterations were made.

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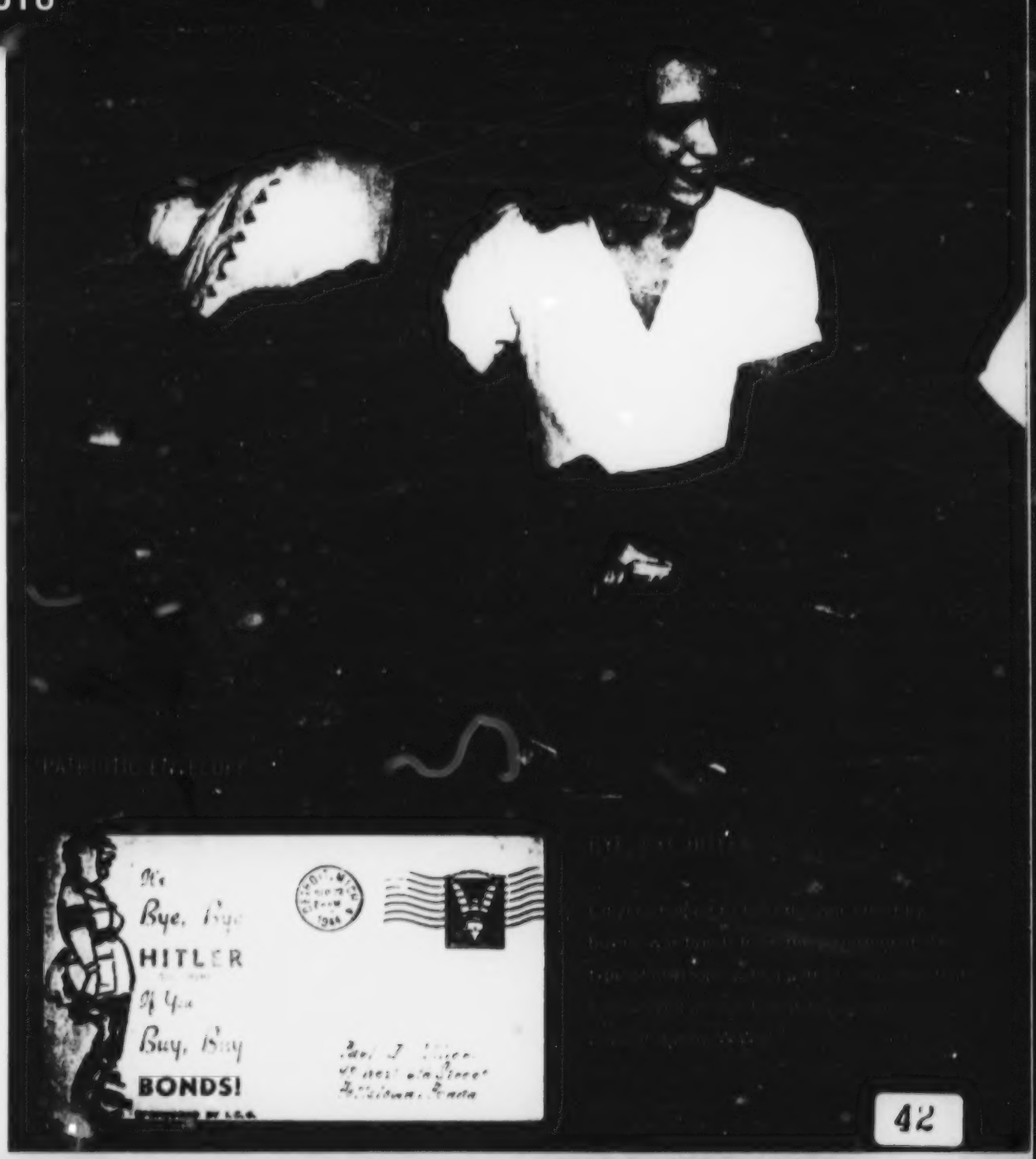
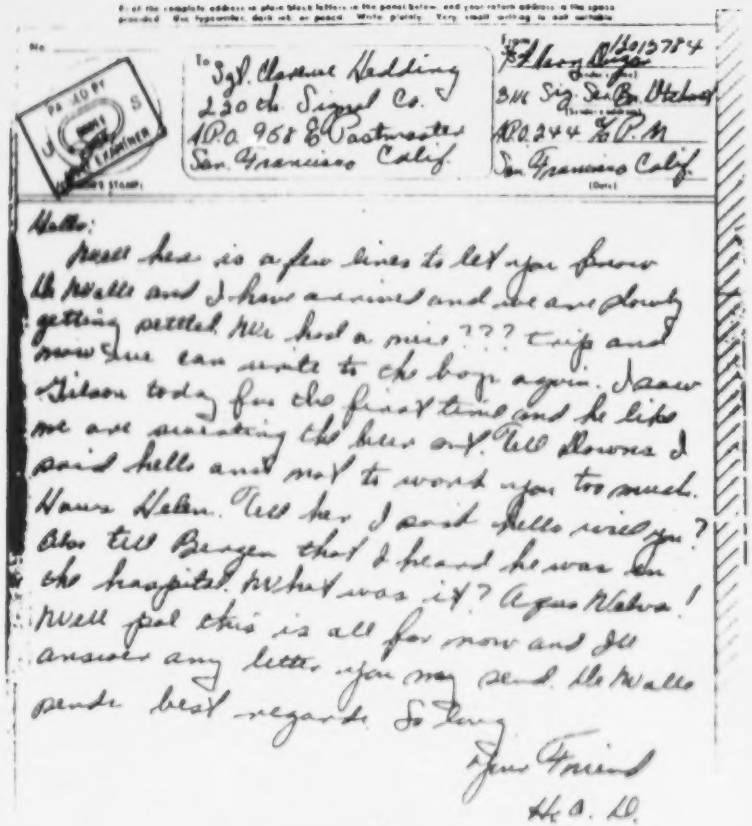
REVISITING IWO JIMA, HALF A CENTURY LATER

Designer Bill Bond designed this stamp for a series commemorating the 50th anniversary of America's participation in the war. More than 50 years earlier, on February 23, 1945, Joe Rosenthal, a newspaper photographer, caught a moment that became a symbol of American valor — U.S. Marines raising an American flag on the small Japanese island of Iwo Jima, which later became a critical landing strip for badly damaged bombers returning from missions over Japan. More than 21,000 Japanese and 6,800 Americans died in the four-day battle for the island. The photograph was used for a commemorative stamp in July 1945 (violating the policy established by the Post Office Department prohibiting the portrayal of living people on stamps). Today, the nation sees this image in the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial on a hill near Arlington Cemetery, overlooking Washington, D.C.





Hello:

Well here is a few lines to let you know the Walls and I have arrived and are slowly getting settled. We had a nice??? trip and now we can write to the boys again. I saw Gilson today for the first time and he like we are operating the bees out. Tell Downs I said hello and not to work you too much. Have Helen. Tell her I said hello write you? Also tell Bergen that I heard he was in the hospital. What was it? Appendicitis! Well gal this is all for now and I'll answer any letter you may send. The Walls sends best regards. So long

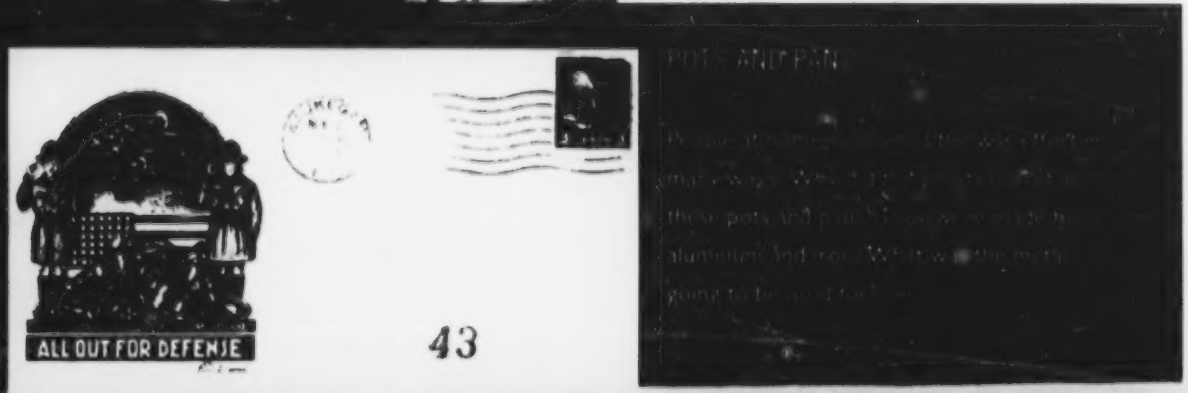
Your Friend

H. A. D.

V-MAIL

YOU'VE HEARD OF E-MAIL. HAVE YOU HEARD OF V-MAIL?

For troops fighting overseas, letters from home were precious. The government wanted to get as many letters to the troops as possible, despite the limited space on boats and planes. To do this, a new technology was needed. The Post Office Department, in cooperation with the armed forces, borrowed a photomail idea from the British and called it V-Mail, the "V" standing for "Victory." Photomail is the process of microphotographing personal messages and official documents on rolls of 16mm or 35mm film. The film was shipped overseas, where it was developed at a receiving station near the addressee. Legible half-size prints were reproduced from the miniature negatives and delivered. With thousands of letters on film, instead of on paper, the weight of the mail was drastically reduced. Some 150,000 V-Mail letters were shipped per sack, replacing what would have been 22 sacks of regular mail. In the 41 months that it was used, V-Mail accounted for more than 1.5 billion microfilm letters.



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WORLD WAR II: LETTER 1

This letter was written by Robert Easton to his wife, Jane, near the end of the war in Europe. First Lieutenant Easton was in Company K, 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Division. His observations and insights reveal a war that people on the home front might not have heard about. He was the leader of a tank-destroyer platoon.

Germany 9 Feb 1945

Dearest Janie,

I write by candlelight from a neck collar, sumptuously furnished with one rickety wood table and two rickety wood chairs. Tech Sgt Brandau sits beyond the candle finishing a "sugar report" to the girl he hopes to go home and marry next month -- his next on the rotation plan, after 28 months overseas -- and some of our boys are relaxing on their new GI sleeping bags on the dirt floor, while singing "Home on the Range," "Birmingham Jail" and other good old American ballads. The center of the domestic scene is our cherished possession, our stove, amply fueled by coal, which is plentiful here about, so that we stay cozy and warm despite snow and ice outside -- which are beginning to melt at last. I'm happy to report

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Now the old timers, veterans of D-Day, are discussing things you never hear at home: the superiority of Jerry's weapons -- his tanks, his submachine pistol or "burp gun," his flares which I've seen at night light up a landscape bright as day while ours flicker dismally as some old gas lamp, his smokeless powder which doesn't reveal his whereabouts while ours gives us away time and again. In fact you realize it's the overwhelming quantity of our material which makes the difference; and if Jerry were here with his whole army instead of facing Russia with most of it, we might be fighting like we have in Italy. They also talk of Jerry's combat machine, some of them very pretty.

"Ever have a woman cape at you?" I ask

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"Back in France we did. She'd withered us all day. Hidden up a tree. Of course we didn't know she was a woman. Finally old Whitey he says: 'I'm gonna get that son-of-a-bitch.'

Patient, Whitey was. He'd wait all afternoon just to get one shot. While she keeps picking away, not hitting anybody but coming closer, he slips off down a hedgerow. He was near St. Lo then. After a couple of hours we hear an M-1 crack. Just one shot. She's lying there under her tree shot clean as a whistle between the eyes. She'd had on one of them soft gray capes Parisian women and it'd fallen off and showed her long yellow hair."

"French or German?"

"Never found out. We were moving on."

Taking a dare I just did 25 push-ups from my fingertips and therefore don't have to lick any envelopes for a week. You missed appreciate the full value of this if you saw the pile of letters the boys contribute to my table nightly and know how fast the task (come in Starla) stifles the spirit. So I read and seal!

Reading and censoring I find no cynicism. These are very unsophisticated people, Janie. No other college graduate beside myself in the entire company, including officers. For these fellows, college graduates are rich men's sons in rear area jobs or the Air Force. Germany, than Paris, are rumored to be in Berlin hearing champagne and cigars with the Supreme [General] while deciding what day to bring the war to an end. The rich are not spoiled. The unsophisticated may be naive, yes. But they're seldom cynical. Profoundly and instinctively they affirm the goodness of daily life.

Speaking of which, Demaree has prepared our evening's snack of pancakes and canned butter and coffee and I must show my appreciation. We are not in any immediate danger at the moment so don't worry.

Received in a fair spring mail, average envelope. I do not know. It's a month or so early from you. We're lean again. I've sent a letter spring and here is the one from Germany. Next spring I hope to deliver it in person.

With all my love,

Bob

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LETTER 1: TRANSCRIPT

Germany (Schleiden), 19 Feb., 1945

Dearest Janie,

I write by candlelight from a brick cellar, sumptuously furnished with one rickety wood table and two rickety wood chairs. Sgt. Branham sits beyond the candle finishing a "sugar report" to the girl he hopes to go home and marry next month - he's next on the rotation plan, after 28 months overseas - and some of our boys are relaxing on their new G.I. sleeping bags on the dirt floor, while singing "Home on the Range," "Birmingham Jail" and other good old American ballads. The center of this domestic scene is our cherished possession, our stove, amply fueled by coal which is plentiful hereabouts, so that we stay cozy and warm despite snow and ice outside - which are beginning to melt at last, I'm happy to report....

Photo on left: Lt. Robert Easton (kneeling in lower left corner) with members of his platoon.

Now the oldtimers, veterans of D-Day, are discussing things you never hear at home: the superiority of Jerry's weapons - his tanks, his machine pistol or "burp gun," his flares which I've seen at night light up a landscape bright as day while ours flicker dismally as some old gas lamp, his smokeless powder which doesn't reveal his whereabouts while ours gives us away time and again. In fact you realize it's the overwhelming quantity of our material which makes the difference; and if Jerry were here with his whole army instead of facing Russia with most of it, we might be fighting till our hair is gray. They also talk of Jerry's combat methods, none of them very pretty.

"Ever have a woman snipe at you?" I ask.

"Back in France we did. She bothered us all day from up a tree. Of course we didn't know she was a woman. Finally old Whitey he says: 'I'm gonna get that son-of-a-bitch.' Patient, Whitey was. He'd wait all afternoon just to get one shot. While she keeps picking away, not hitting anybody but coming close, he slips off down a hedgerow. He was near St. Lô then. She's laying there under her tree shot clean as a whistle between the eyes. She'd had on one of them soft gray caps snipers wear and it'd fallen off and showed her long yellow hair."

"French or German?"

"Never found out. We was moving on."

Taking a dare I just did 25 push-ups from my fingertips and therefore don't have to lick any envelopes for a week. You would appreciate the full value of this if you saw the pile of letters the boys contribute to my table nightly and knew how flat the task (and the taste) after the first 30 I read and seal!

Reading and censoring [his soldiers' letters] I find no cynicism. These are unsophisticated people, Janie. No other college graduates beside myself in the entire company, including officers. To these fellows, college graduates are rich men's sons in rear area jobs or the Air Force. Some of their fathers are rumored to be in Berlin having champagne and cigars with the German generals, while deciding which day to bring the war to an end. The rich are mistrusted. The unsophisticated may be naive, yes. But they're seldom cynical. Profoundly and naturally they affirm the goodness of daily life.

Speaking of which, Demasse had prepared our evening's snack of pancakes and canned butter and coffee and I must show my appreciation. We are not in any particular danger at the moment so don't worry.

Enclosed is a first spring bud, perhaps a willow, I do not know. It's a month or so early. Every year we've been apart I've sent a bit of spring and here is the one from Germany. Next spring I hope to deliver it in person.

With all my love, Bob

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1

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4

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WORLD WAR II: LETTER 2

There were nearly 300,000 women serving with the United States armed forces during World War II. These courageous women served as nurses, doctors, clerks, and Red Cross workers, as well as piloting aircraft for non-military purposes. They played a very important role in defending our country by providing medical, clerical, and other tasks both in the United States and near the front lines. This letter was written by June Wandery of the Army Nurse Corps. As a combat surgical nurse, she was close to the front lines in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, France, and Germany. She earned seven battle stars. When the war in Europe ended in the spring of 1945, she was stationed in southern Germany, caring for the survivors of Dachau.

Lt. June Wandrey, Army Nurse Corps, near Naples, Italy

5-31-43 Somewhere in North Africa

Dear Ruth,

V-mail is safer as it is flown over and doesn't run the risk of being sunk. I celebrated Memorial Day by going swimming at Ferryville. The beach isn't bad, but not as nice as the one at Bizerta, which is really sandy. I cut my foot on some stones. The sun is very, very hot.

I planned to say you a letter but we had jeep trouble on the way up so we didn't get to Sousse until closing time for the shops. Our male officers are the only ones who can use our hospital transportation. The nurses never go anywhere unless they walk, hitch-hike, or have a friend who has a jeep.

Once we were stationed next to an airfield. They had the prettiest little bombers. They promised to give me a ride in one some day. You would have to sit up behind the pilot's head. It's a very small space. They let me wear our clothes in aviation gas. The dirt just fell out of our uniforms. Neat.

Surprising how one becomes used to an air raid. It's about the most spectacular thing one could possibly see. You are so fascinated watching the anti aircraft fire and the light from the bursting bombs that you forget about your own personal danger. No one panics. They are so well trained, there isn't any confusion, no one makes an outcry. On a pitch dark night, an air raid looks like a big Fourth of July celebration. You can hear the enemy planes overhead, and when they get in the beam of the large searchlights, you can see the planes, if they're low enough, even the pilots. But then it is too bad for them the enemy planes usually drop flares so that they can see where they want to bomb. It's eerie watching the flares float to earth. It's then that I wish our Red Crosses were as big as the Empire State Building.

By the time you get this, you will be out of school for a nice long vacation but a way I envy you, but just for a minute. While this war is on, I just couldn't be back in the States, despite the inconveniences we experience. They are so understandable in view of surgical nurses. The newspapers and magazines that we get to read are touching also. We're singing and playing all the old songs that we do remember the words to and the other songs we just hum the melody. Can't you guess and send me the words to "Star Dust, Make Believe, You'll Be All Mine to Come Home To" and a package of phonograph needles.

Saturday I went through the most beautiful cathedral in Carthage. The ceilings were all done in mosaic; the stained glass windows and statues were gorgeous. It was mammoth, sitting high up on a hilltop overlooking the brilliant blue waters of the Mediterranean. You have never seen anything quite so beautiful as the blue of the sea with the purple mountains in the distance.

Wide eyed as always,

Jane

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55

Sicily, July 1943. Lt. Wandrey is third from the left reading a letter from home.

56

LETTER 2: TRANSCRIPT

Somewhere in North Africa, May 31, 1943

Dear Ruth,

V-Mail is safer as it is flown over and doesn't run the risk of being sunk. I celebrated Memorial Day by going swimming at Ferryville. The beach isn't bad, but not as nice as the one at Bizerte, which is really sandy. I cut my foot on some stones. The sun is very, very hot....

I planned to buy you a silver bracelet but we had jeep trouble on the way up so we didn't get to Tunis until closing time for the shops. Our male officers are the only ones who can use our hospital transportation. The nurses never go anywhere unless they walk, hitch-hike, or have a friend who has a jeep....

Once we were stationed next to an airfield. They had the niftiest little bombers. They promised to give me a ride in one someday. You would have to lie up behind the pilot's head. It's a very small place. They let us clean our clothes in aviation gas. The dirt just fell out of our uniforms. Neat.

Surprising how one becomes used to an air raid. It's about the most spectacular thing one could possibly see. You are so fascinated watching the anti-aircraft fire and the light from bursting bombs that you forget all about your own personal danger. No one panics. They are so well trained. There isn't any confusion, no one makes an outcry. On a pitch-dark night, an air raid looks like a big Fourth of July celebration. You can hear the enemy planes overhead, and when they get in the beam of the large searchlights, you can see the planes, if they are low enough, even the pilots. But then it is too bad for them. The enemy planes usually drop flares so that they can see where they want to bomb. It's eerie watching the flares float to the earth. It's then that I wish our huge Red Cross were as big as the Empire State Building.

By the time you get this, you will be out of school for a nice, long vacation. In a way I envy you, but just for a minute. While this war is on, I just couldn't be back in the States, despite the inconveniences we experience. They are so desperately in need of surgical nurses. The newspapers and magazines that we get to read are months old. We've sung and resung all the old songs that we can remember the words to and the other songs we just hum the melody. Could you please send me the words to "Star Dust," "Make Believe," "You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To," and a package of phonograph needles.

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Wide eyed as always, June

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Why does Nurse Wandery feel that mail carried by planes in 1943 is safer than by ship?
2. Why would Nurse Wandery want the red cross painted on the roof of the hospital to be as big as "the Empire State Building?" What does the red cross symbol mean?
3. Why does she say, "somewhere in North Africa," instead of giving an exact location? Describe Nurse Wandrey's feelings about her role in the war.
4. Class Discussion: Should women hold combat or noncombat positions in the military?
5. Geography Question: Where and why would American forces be in North Africa at this time?

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ENVELOPE JOURNEY: OCCUPIED!

Examining a historical document, even an envelope, can reveal facts about the world at the time the envelope was mailed. This envelope originated in The Netherlands. Look closely at the stamps and postmarks and answer the questions below.

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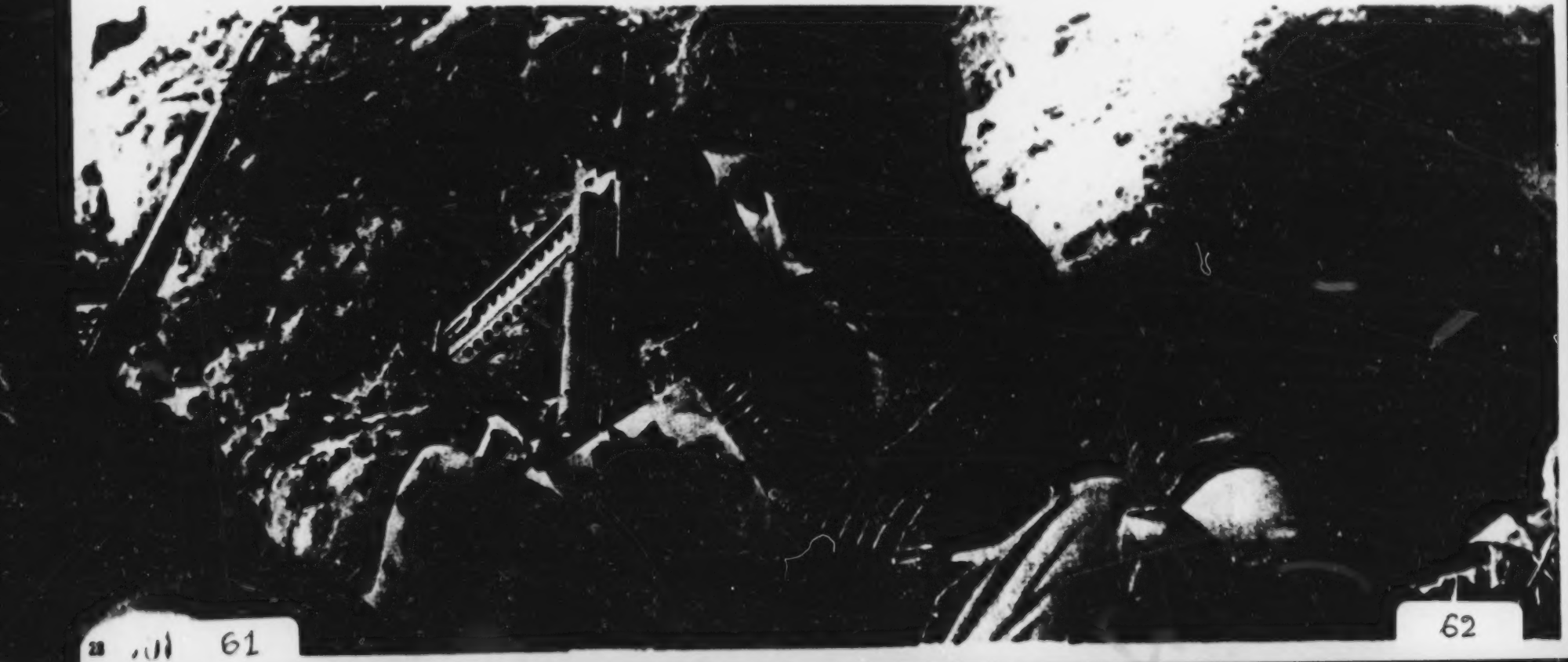
THE VIETNAM WAR: MAIL CALL

Vietnam was a part of the French Colony of Indochina. A nationalist revolution led by the Vietnamese Communist Party drove out the French in 1954. The United States intervened in Vietnam to maintain governments in southeastern Asia that would be sympathetic to the West. By 1969, more than 543,000 American soldiers were fighting in Vietnam. They used state-of-the-art helicopters, pilotless aircraft, chemical defoliants, and other advanced technologies. Despite the superior military technology, the war was long and difficult. American soldiers faced a strongly motivated enemy.

This was the first war in American history to be televised daily. The American home front was already in the throes of social upheaval as the Civil Rights Movement was gaining momentum. Vocal antiwar groups formed, dividing opinion on the war effort. Mail played a vital role in communicating the struggles both on the battlefield and the home front.



THE VIETNAM WAR: EX POST FACTO

GREEN EVERYWHERE

The war in Vietnam, a country dense with vegetation, was predominately a jungle war. In a brief experiment, mail for the troops was dropped from helicopters in green bags to hide it from the enemy. But the bags proved too difficult to locate in the green jungle. Some of the bags were lost, and the experiment was ended.

NEW FORMS OF MAIL

During the Vietnam War audiotapes were an alternative method for soldiers to communicate with people at home. During Operation Desert Storm in Iraq, the idea evolved into using videotapes to communicate. Today, soldiers can communicate through e-mail and other forms of satellite communication. With these electronic methods of communication, how will historians of the future document wartime?

THE VIETNAM WAR: LETTER 1

Tuy Hoa
7 Feb 66

(1)

Dear Mom,

I know you must be worried to death from not hearing from me but at least it was unavoidable this time. We moved out about a week ago from our Base camp at Tuy Hoa and replaced a unit of ROK marines. I was right in the middle of a letter when we got the word to move and I had to pack it away. These ROK's we replaced were dug in defensively in the middle of a rice paddy. They had been hit by two Battalions of VC a few nights before suffering 48 casualties and killing over 100 VC. They hadn't been sending out any patrols or recon so when they dropped us out here we had no idea what the situation was.

Since we've been here we've suffered pretty heavy casualties yesterday the count stood at two dead and fifteen wounded, but last night B and C company got into it with a Battalion of VC and at last count there were 6 dead and many wounded. By the time you get this I imagine you will have heard about the 101 on news. We killed a lot of VC and captured a lot of weapons and that's what counts.

I got into it pretty heavy a few days ago and it was a miracle that I'm alive. I can give you the date and time and see if there was any indication of extreme danger at that time on my chart. It happened on the 4th of Feb. There was about 12 of us with the Lieutenant out on a routine patrol about ½ mile from the hill the rest of the company was on. We were searching through an abandoned village looking mainly for chickens, eggs and mats to sleep on. We were crossing a dike between two houses when we were opened up on by about 10 VC with automatic weapons. I was carrying the radio which made me a prime Target that's not my usual job but on this particular day I ended up with it. We started returning fire and my weapon jammed on me on three different occasions. (2) This whole fight was being observed by our men on the hill. We received instructions to try and maneuver and push the VC which we did were able to do fairly successful and were told that help was on the way. The guys on the hill said they could observe about a platoon of VC moving away from us. Any way they entered a tree line as we were coming out of a another tree line with about a three hundred yard open rice paddy between us. We were about half way across when they opened up from the tree line again. We were laying in about 6 inches of water and a foot of mud. We held back for an air strike and artillery. These helped some but they didn't follow through. We were told to begin pushing again. When we stood up they wounded two men and when the first man ran over to one of them they killed him. This put us without a leader because the Platoon Sgt. was way around to the left trying to flank them. About this time the company was coming up behind us and they didn't know where we were exactly. The fire from the VC was going over us and into them and the company was firing back at us. [redacted]. So we were receiving murderous fire from both sides. They were so close that when one of us would try and stand up and tell our guys they were firing at us we could hear them yelling "There one! Get him! Get him!" We ended up with one seriously wounded by our compan and the other one were not sure who got him. It was about 2:30 pm when they first fired on us and about 4:30 pm when we finally met up with the company and pushed the VC to the river. When you check your chart be sure to allow for the time difference. You probably can't tell to much from what I'm writing but I mainly interested in getting this letter off to ease your worry. As you can see I'm writing this on the back of one of Sharon's letters. I carry all your letters in the top of my helmet and I was able to scrounge up an envelope. I'll close this now and I'll go out on the resupply chopper. Don't worry and I'll write just whenever I get the chance. I'll get [illegible]. Love Johnny

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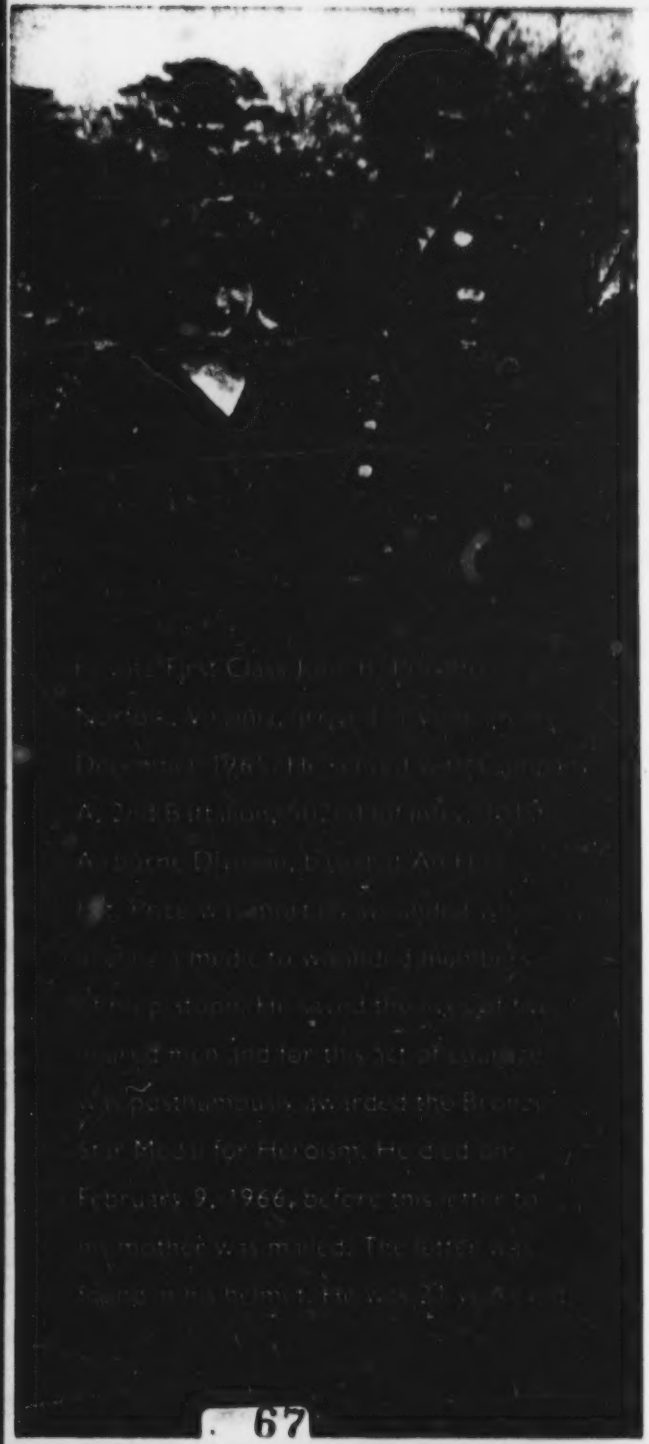

LETTER 1: TRANSCRIPT

Tuy Hoa

7 Feb 66

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I know you must be worried from not hearing from me, but at least it was unavoidable this time. We moved out about a week ago from our base camp at Tuy Hoa and replaced a unit of ROK [Republic of Korea] marines. I was right in the middle of a letter when we got the word to move, and had to pack it away. These ROK's we replaced were dug in defensively in the middle of a rice paddy. They had been hit by two Battalions of VC [Viet Cong, the enemy] a few nights before, suffering 48 casualties and killing over 100 VC. They hadn't been sending out patrols or recon, so when they dropped us out here we had no idea what the situation was.

Since we've been here we've suffered pretty heavy casualties. Yesterday the count stood at 2 dead and 15 wounded. But last night B and C Company got into it with a battalion of VC, and at last count there were 6 dead and many wounded. By the time you get this I imagine you will have heard about the 101[st] on [the] news. We've killed a lot of VC and captured a lot of weapons, and that's what counts.

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We started returning fire, and my weapon jammed on me on three different occasions. This whole fight was being observed by our men on the hill. We received instructions to try and maneuver and push the VC which we were able to do fairly successful, and were told that help was on the way. The guys on the hill said they could observe about a platoon of VC moving away from us. Anyway, they entered a tree line as we were coming out of a another tree line with about a 300-yard open rice paddy between us. We were about halfway across when they opened up from the tree line again. We were laying in about six inches of water and a foot of mud. We held back for an air strike and artillery. These helped some, but they didn't follow through.

LETTER 1: TRANSCRIPT [continued]

We were told to begin pushing again. When we stood up, they wounded two men, and when the Lieut. ran over to one of them, they killed him. This put us without a leader because the platoon sergeant was way around to the left trying to flank them. About this time the company was coming up behind us and they didn't know where we were exactly. The fire from the VC was going over us and into them and the company was firing back at us. So we were receiving murderous fire from both side[s]. They were so close that when one of us would try and stand up and tell our guys they were firing at us we could hear them yelling, "There's one! Get him! Get him!" We ended up with one seriously wounded by our own fire, and the other one not sure who got him. It was about 2:30 p.m. when they first fired on us and about 4:30 p.m. when we finally met up with the company and pushed the VC to the river. When you check your chart, be sure to allow for the time difference.

You probably can't tell too much from what I'm writing, but I'm mainly interested in getting this letter off to ease your worry. As you can see I'm writing this on the back of one of Shawn's letters. I carry all your letters in the top of my helmet, and I was able to scrounge up an envelope. I'll close this now and [it] will go out on the resupply chopper.

Don't worry, and I'll write first chance I'll get.

Love, Johnny

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. After reading the letter, what assumptions can you make about the living conditions of Pvt. Price and his fellow soldiers?
2. How important were letters to Pvt. Price? How can you tell?
3. Price talks about being a target by carrying the radio. Do you think that would be a problem for soldiers today? Why?
4. How do you think Pvt. Price's mother received this letter, if he was killed before sending it?

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THE VIETNAM WAR: LETTER 2

This letter writer discusses the realities of war and pacifism.

31 Dec 69

Red,

I am busy as a green world cat a green canvas roof over me, green sandbag walls everywhere dressed in green camouflage fatigues and sitting on a green cot that once was white but now is mildewed which all around me an act of God is blowing the little radio station apart. We're getting the full edge of a tropical storm that has moved in down by Da Nang and is moving up north towards us. The monsoons are almost upon us. It's raining fairly hard. Fog has cut visibility to seventy feet at high noon and zero at night and a thirty mile an hour wind is gusting over our hill relay station playing hell with my tent, blowing down our radio antennas and slowly but surely uprooting the cyclone fence around our little knoll that is supposed to protect us from incoming RPG's (rocket propelled grenades). Yesterday some Gooks threw a white phosphorus grenade down the windward side of the hill and the resulting fire almost burned down our little post. Burning embers made a screen out of my tent so now I'm sitting in here cold, wet unbelievably dirty after eight days up here fairly miserable - yet strangely content. My team was supposed to be relieved today but the weather has grounded the choppers and cut off all resupply so not only are we stuck up here till the blow over but are low on food and almost out of water. Ammo is plentiful however and that's important. They say a cold, hungry and thirsty man can fight but a hard well fed and satisfied man can't without ammunition. Yesterday our little garrison was cut by a third with one entire team being airlifted out and no replacements

enemy sir. We are consolidated into two positions about a hundred metres apart with no one manning the hill between us and the fog keeping us from observing the ground. This makes for a very nervous situation, especially since our support will be erratic at best and non-existent at worst in the weather if Victor comes up the hill. The merry life of a Ranger in the Orient.

I don't really know the reason I'm writing this. You wrote me once asked was well; and you were the first for which I'm grateful but I think I'll hold this when I get back and see if you write again. Sort of childishly playing till for that until I see if you were dropping a line for the sake of it or to send an old Toronto a word or two every now and then. Actually I'm writing because I have to write or go out of my mind and you're "it" so to speak. Things happen over here that you just can't keep to yourself - if you do you break or else, slowly go "flak happy", get quieter and eventually get trapped when your mind has strayed from the job at hand. Sometimes, usually when exercising like you going crazy and staring at the walls, you've got to talk things out and it helps a lot if the other person is also a buddy who has been through the fire too and can understand or a member of the opposite sex who can't and you hope never will be able to. Even if I don't mail this at least I'll have written it out which will make me feel better.

Last Monday I went on my first hunter killer operation and saw Wars close up for the first time. We had two teams, twelve men inserted at dawn about two miles inland and slightly north of Cha Lai about an hour off the deck. As we set up around a trail and a lone NVA officer walked into the middle of us. We tried for a POW but he panicked and took off in a blizzard of shells. I had him in my sights three times, aimed at him and he just disappeared. No Hollywood theatrics, one minute he's a living, running human form the next ground like dam, just a red lump of clay. At first I thought it was I that got him but it was a shotgun blast that brought him down and I carry an M16 so am not sure. After that everyone in hearing distance knew we were in the area but on hunter killer operations we stay to fight rather than extract upon making contact. We found some hats the NVA had been working on then moved out across a dried up paddy when all hell broke loose. We were strung out on open ground with the point man less than 10 feet from the NVA when we were ambushed with grenades & automatic weapons. If they had a heavy MG or a mortar we'd all be dead but as it was we were unbelievably lucky and not a man was killed. Two men took shrapnel in the face & I took some in the shoulder and then our NCO and point assaulted the ambushing force, the wounded men mauled the NVA after them and Victor broke contact and ran. We ran into the woodline that the NVA had been without taking any more casualties. Then after being pinned down for about two hours were extracted under air support. Only one of us was really wounded - my wound and one other's being insignificant - but we really sacked out that time.

The frightening thing about it all is that it is so very easy to kill in war. There is no remorse, no theatrical "washing of the hands" to get rid of non-existent blood, and even any regrets. When it happens you

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are you afraid. Have you ever been in your life - my hands shook so much I had trouble reloading and it took a terrific effort to postpone and mentalize and control what would normally be called panic but which, somehow, isn't. You're scared, really scared and there's no thinking about it. You just because that little son of a bitch is doing his best to kill you and you desperately want to live, to go home, to get drunk & walk down the street on a date again and suddenly the grenades aren't any of any more, the weapons stop and unbelievably fast it seems, it's all over and you're alive because someone else is either dead or so anxious to stay alive that he's run away and you are the victor - if there is such a thing in war. You don't think about it ...

I have truly come to envy the honest pacifist who honestly believes that no killing is permissable and can, with a clear conscience, stay home and not take part in these conflicts. I wish I could do the same but I can't see letting another take my place and my risks over here and the pacifist ideal can't drive any burning objection to it from my mind; the fact that the only reason pacifists such as the Amish can ever live in an orderly society is because someone - be they police or soldiers - is taking risks to keep the wolves away. To be a sheep in a world of sheep is one thing, to be a sheep in a world of predators something else and if someone hides behind the label of sheep due to cowardice while another has to take the place holding the predators at bay..... somehow I just can't see it, or do it - not when I get behind in it. I guess that's why I'm over here, why I fought so hard to come here and why, even though I'm scared

most of the time, I'm content to be here. At least I'm doing my part according to what I believe. The only thing keeping the grubs from the flock are the lambs

But I'll tell you that, allegorically speaking, it is a hard and scary task to be a goalkeeper.

I'll run on here for quite a bit and am sorry if I bore you but it helps to talk some things out and there aren't too many good conversationalists to talk to. I hope you don't mind my rambling on like this but it looks like I'm going to be stopped now as the words are up to 50 wpm and my fist is already sore-knuckled and I've got to head for the trenches. They're playing us a full scale barrage called in expected to develope 80 wpm words up the hill. It looks like a cold, wet, rough night which will be made more so by the fact that all our clothes are tropical gear. I hope somebody, somewhere is having fun tonight.

George

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LETTER 2: TRANSCRIPT

31 Aug 69

Red,

I am living in a green world with a green canvas roof over me...dressed in green camouflage fatigues and sitting on a green cot that once was white but now is mildewed while all around me an act of God is blowing this little radio station apart. We're getting the tail end of a tropical storm that has moved in down by Da Nang and is moving up north toward us. The monsoons are almost upon us. It's raining fairly hard, fog has cut visibility to seventy feet at high noon and zero at night and a thirty mile an hour wind is gusting over our little relay station playing hell with my tent, blowing down our radio antennas and slowly but surely uprooting the cyclone fence around our little knoll that is supposed to protect us from incoming RPG's [rocket propelled grenades]. Yesterday some dunce threw a white phosphorous grenade down the windward side of the hill and the resulting fire almost burned down our little post. Burning embers made a screen out of my tent, so now I'm sitting in here cold, wet, unbelievably dirty after eight days up here, fairly miserable – yet strangely content. My team was supposed to be relieved today but the weather has grounded the choppers and cut off all resupply so not only are we stuck up here till this blows over but are low on food and almost out of water. Ammo is plentiful however, and that's the important thing; a cold hungry and thirsty man can fight but a warm, well fed and satiated man can't without ammunition.... We are consolidated into two positions about one hundred meters apart with no one manning the hill between us and the fog keeping us from observing the ground. This makes for a very nervous situation, especially since air support will be erratic at best and non-existent at worst in this weather if Victor comes up the hill. The merry life of a Ranger in the Orient.

I don't really know the reason I'm writing this.... Actually I'm writing because I have to write or go out of my mind....

Last Monday I went on my first hunter killer operation.... We tried for a POW but he panicked and took off in a blizzard of shells. I had him in my sights threw three slugs at him and he just disappeared. No Hollywood theatrics, one minute he's a living, running human being, the next second he's down, just a red lump of clay.... After that everyone in hearing distance knew we were in the area.... We were strung out on open ground with the point man less than 10 feet from the NVA, [North Vietnam Army] when we were ambushed with grenades and automatic weapons.... We ran into the woodline...then after being pinned down for about two hours we were extracted under air support.... We really lucked out that time.

The frightening thing about it all is that it is so very easy to kill in war.... You kill because that little SOB is doing his best to kill you and you desperately want to live, to go home...or walk down a street on a date again and suddenly the grenades aren't going off any more, the weapons stop and unbelievably fast it seems, it's all over and you're alive because someone else is either dead or so anxious to stay alive that he's run away and you are the victor – if there is such a thing in war.

I have truly come to envy the honest pacifist who honestly believes that no killing is permissible...the fact that the only reason pacifists such as the Amish can even live in an orderly society is because someone - be they police or soldiers - is taking risks to keep the wolves away..... I guess that's why I'm over here, why I fought, so hard.... At least I'm doing my part according to what I believe.... I hope somebody, somewhere is having fun tonight.

George

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. For George, what was the most frightening thing about war?
2. What is a pacifist and what were George's feelings about pacifists?
3. Class Discussion: There were many different opinions about whether or not the United States should be fighting in Vietnam. What were George's feelings and beliefs about fighting in this war?

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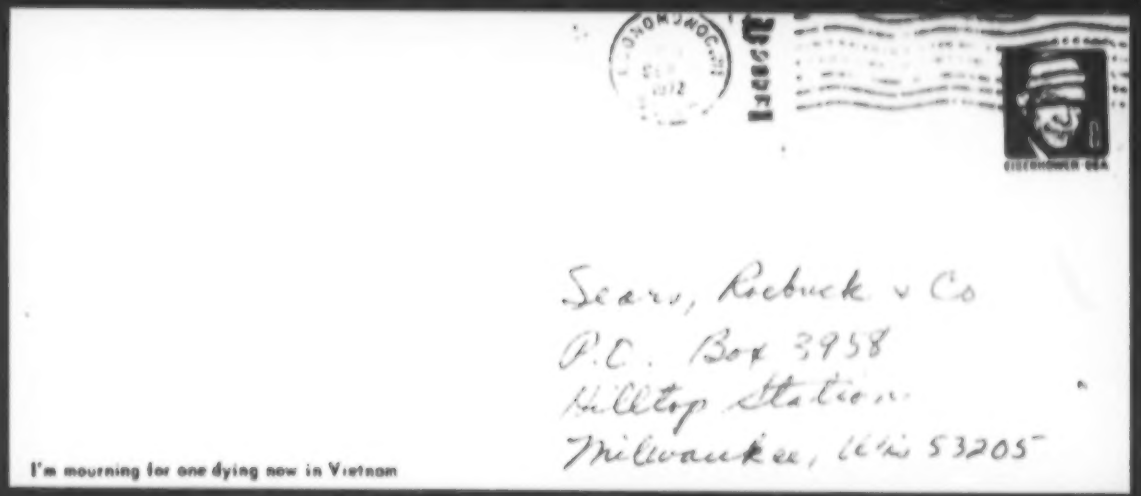
ENVELOPE JOURNEY: ENVELOPES WITH A MESSAGE

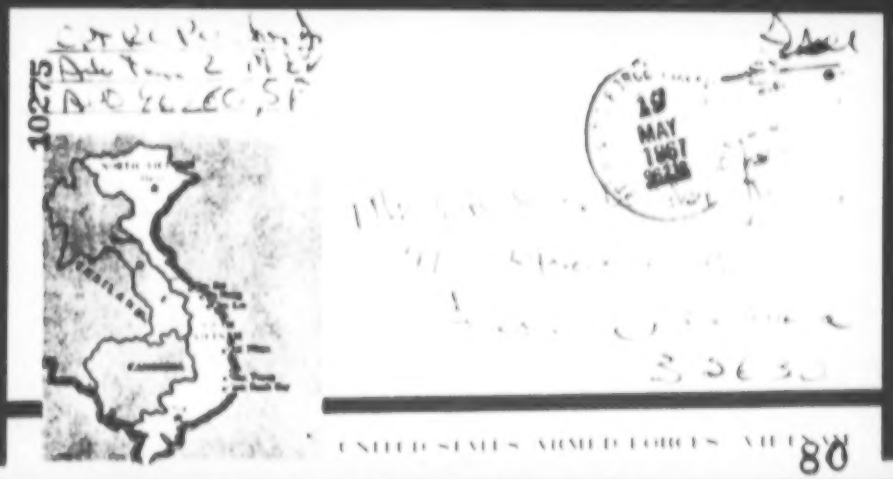
PROTEST COVER

This envelope was sent by a soldier. Soldiers at the battle front did not have to pay postage. Has this changed today?



MAP COVER

This envelope was sent by a soldier. Soldiers at the battle front did not have to pay postage. Has this changed today?



FROM ONE CLASSROOM HISTORY TEACHER TO ANOTHER

Dear Teachers

It is becoming increasingly recognized that one of the most effective methods of teaching is the "hands-on" approach. Students perform experiments in science class, using a variety of manipulatives in math. Why not use the same technique in the history classroom?

One activity that history teachers have found to be effective is to have students examine stamps and mail-related material from the time period being studied. This includes used envelopes (called covers by stamp collectors), and the letters contained in the envelopes.

What are the advantages of using this material? First of all, the students are dealing with primary source material, the stuff of which history is made. When examining such materials, making inferences, and drawing conclusions, they are engaging in critical thinking. As one teacher put it, "They're doing history, rather than just studying it."

A second important advantage from the point of view of the classroom teacher is that the kids enjoy it. They like using the old letters! Don't be surprised if some of your less motivated students get involved in trying to figure out illegible words. Kids enjoy the challenge.

Another benefit of using local philatelic artifacts is that it helps students understand that American history is not just a story in a book about unknown people in faraway places, but involves people all over the country, including right where they live. For instance, a letter from a nineteenth-century Yale student that mentions cotton prices, helps make clear to Connecticut middle-school students the relationship between Northern mills and Southern cotton plantations. Correspondence from the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company discussing "a method...for consuming smoke" will help Chicago students understand that air pollution was a concern even in 1901!

There are several good techniques for using old covers and letters in the classroom. One is to simply put them in a protective plastic covering and pass them around. Be prepared for some students' disbelief that they are really as old as they look. They're so used to prepackaged curriculum kits that they find it difficult to believe they're actually handling the real thing!

A very effective method of incorporating this material is to design a set of questions based on the letter being studied. Questions should range from what seems obvious, i.e.: What was the cost to mail the letter? or, Who received the letter? to the more sophisticated, Which party controlled the White House when the letter was written? or What can we tell about the author from the contents of the letter? Dividing the class into groups, each of which has been supplied a photocopy of the letter, can create a cooperative learning opportunity.

By using questions that vary in difficulty, all students in a heterogeneous class will find some measure of success. Also, by working in groups, students are more likely to figure out the hard to decipher words in the letters. Once the groups have had sufficient time to answer the questions, the teacher should review them with the whole class. Be sure to listen to all answers. Someone may read something into a letter that everyone else, including the teacher, has missed!

The questions many readers are asking at this point is, How does one obtain old covers and letters from their community? Isn't something that old an expensive collector's item? It isn't necessarily expensive. Most large towns and more than a few smaller ones have stamp dealers often listed in the Yellow Pages. Such dealers will frequently have stocks of old covers, often with enclosures, generally at very reasonable prices of a dollar or two – sometimes even less. In general, an expenditure of ten dollars will provide enough material for several days' worth of lessons. Also, from time to time it is possible to buy an entire lot of covers all from the same family.

An alternative method of obtaining these materials is to attend a stamp show. These are held throughout the year in various parts of the country. Listings of them appear every week in the newspapers *Linn's Stamp News* and *Stamp Collector*. Stamp dealers are also great about searching for material for their customers. Tell them what you want, and you'll be contacted when it's found. Stamp dealers seem to be universally interested in education and are particularly enthusiastic about using philately in teaching.

Bring history home to your students by using locally produced covers, letters, and stamps and watch this hands-on approach make for some of your most successful lessons.

R. F. West

R. F. West is a social studies teacher at Robert E. Fitch Middle School in Groton, Connecticut. He is also a stamp collector and columnist for the *Group Stamp News*.

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ANSWERS TO LETTERS AND ENVELOPES

CIVIL WAR: LETTER 1

1. Confederate States of America. None.
2. People writing depressing letters to the soldiers. Soldiers depended on letters for news and encouragement. People writing a cheering letter.
3. "an offense in the sight of God."

CIVIL WAR: LETTER 2

1. The editor of the *Christian Recorder* newspaper. He wanted a large African American audience to read his opinion.
2. There was a lot of gunfire.
3. Equal pay for Black soldiers.
   All soldiers face the same danger.

WORLD WAR II: LETTER 1

1. German soldiers. A concrete letter.
2. The Germans had advanced weaponry technology. It was much better.
3. The Americans had an "overwhelming quantity of materiel."
4. Soviet casualties: 27,000,000
   American casualties: 407,000
   These locations became the Soviet Bloc.

WORLD WAR II: LETTER 2

1. In the early part of 1943, German U-boats were sinking the Allies' boats at a rate of 4 out of 5.
2. A medical facility, marked with a red cross, was not supposed to be fired upon.
3. For security reasons. She feels critical of the war effort.

WORLD WAR II: ENVELOPE

1. The Germans occupied The Netherlands after they invaded.
2. Nazi Party
3. Anne Frank
4. 12 stamps; 12 cents

VIETNAM WAR: LETTER 1

1. They were extremely dangerous.
2. Letters were very important. He carried letters in his helmet.
3. No, technology has made it possible for radios to be very small.
4. It was found in his helmet. He had not yet mailed it. It was delivered to his family along with his personal belongings after his death.

VIETNAM WAR: LETTER 2

1. It is so easy to kill.
2. Someone who opposes war. He envies them, but believes that they can exist only because others protect them and keep order.

VIETNAM WAR: ENVELOPES

Map Cover: Soldiers do not pay postage for sending letters when they are on an active battlefront.

RESOURCES

BOOKS AND LETTER COLLECTIONS

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PHOTO CREDITS

INSIDE COVER/TABLE OF CONTENTS
Civil War soldiers: Courtesy of Library of Congress
Receiving mail in World War II: Courtesy of National Archives
Vietnam soldier: Courtesy of United States Military History Institute

CIVIL WAR
Soldiers reading in battlefield: Courtesy of Library of Congress
Battlefield post office: Courtesy of Library of Congress
Clara Barton at post office: Courtesy of Library of Congress
1995 Clara Barton stamp: Courtesy of United States Postal Service
Graham letter: Courtesy of Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Confederate Soldier: Courtesy of Eleanor S. Brockenbrough Library, The Museum of the Confederacy
African American Union soldier: Courtesy of Chicago Historical Society
Christian Recorder letter: Courtesy of Library of Congress

WORLD WAR II
Soldiers reading mail: Courtesy of National Archives, photograph #111-SC-18577
28th Division marching in Paris: Courtesy of Associated Press
Patriotic envelope, pots and pans: Courtesy of Robert F. Welt
Iwo Jima stamp, 1995: Courtesy of United States Postal Service
Women sorting V-Mail: Courtesy of National Archives, photograph #111-SC-396916
Photograph: Courtesy of Robert Easton
Letter: Courtesy of Robert Easton*
Photograph: Courtesy of June Wandery
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VIETNAM WAR
Soldier: Courtesy of U.S. Army Aviation Museum, Fort Rucker, Ala.
Helicopter carrying mail bags: Courtesy of U.S. Army Aviation Museum, Fort Rucker, Ala.
Vietnam Memorial Stamp, 1984: Courtesy of United States Postal Service
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Vietnam Ranger: Courtesy of National Infantry Museum, Fort Benning, Georgia
Letter: Courtesy of Rosemary Dresch
Mourning protest envelope: Courtesy of John M. Hotchner

* These letters were rewritten by the authors. After they were first published, the originals were lost. The authors kindly rewrote them in their own hand for the Postal Pack.

COLLECTING OUR HISTORY
Stamps: Courtesy of the ©United States Postal Service

CREDITS

This Postal Pack was created by the
Education Department of the National Postal
Museum, Smithsonian Institution

Wendy Ashby-Weiss, Head of Education

Jeff Kishiman, Education Intern,
George Washington University

James H. Bruns, Director
Nancy A. Popp, Museum Program Specialist
Joseph Gerace, Museum Specialist
Esther Washington, Program Manager
Robert F. Welt, Teacher Advisor and Philatelist
Patricia Bradford, Teacher Intern,
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
John M. Hotchner, Philatelist

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UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

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COLLECTING OUR HISTORY

Not only do stamps make it possible for us to send mail, they are also beautiful documents that preserve history. Many stamps commemorate events and people that have played important roles in creating our history. Collecting stamps is a great way to remember these influential moments and unique people. Historical stamps are available at your Post Office.

The process begins democratically, with Americans throughout the country sending in suggestions to the Postal Service. A Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, made up of artists, historians, stamp collectors, and business people, reviews the suggestions and selects the subject that it feels the American public would most like to see on stamps. Requests for stamps commemorating people. Individuals can not be honored on a stamp until 10 years after their death. The Postmaster General makes the final decision.

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